



## **The Municipal EcoLink**

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

**May 2021**

*The Municipal EcoLink* is a monthly e-bulletin designed to inform you of the latest environmental ideas, trends, grants, rules and more from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). We respectfully request that the following is electronically distributed or otherwise made available to your municipal committees, councils and boards. Please feel free to post it on your municipal website as well. You may read past issues at [The Municipal EcoLink](#).

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### **NHDES Response to COVID-19**

NHDES reopened the Concord and Portsmouth offices to the public on May 7.

### **Accepting 2021 Coastal Resilience Grant Applications**

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program is soliciting 2021 Coastal Resilience Grant (CRG) applications for coastal community and habitat resilience projects. For instructions, evaluation criteria, and to access the Application Form, visit the [Coastal Resilience Grant webpage](#). Applications must be submitted using the NHDES Application Form no later than 4:00 PM EDT on Friday, July 30, 2021.

### **New Dock Registration Rules**

New Dock Registration rules have been adopted as interim rules with an effective date of June 15, 2021. The rules create a streamlined registration process for owners of legally existing docking structures in non-tidal waters. More detailed information about the adopted interim rules can be found in the following two fact sheets: [New Voluntary Non-Tidal Docking Structures Registration Process \(WB-28\)](#) and [Permitting for Private, Non-Commercial Freshwater Docking Structures \(WB-19\)](#). A video will also be published before June 15 on the Wetlands Bureau website to explain a new electronic submission process that will be rolled out in conjunction with the new Dock Registration rules.

### **NH RSA 154:8-b Limiting Use of Class B Fluorine-Containing Firefighting Foams**

During the 2019 legislative season, the NH Legislature adopted Senate Bill 257 relative to PFAS in firefighting foam and firefighter protective clothing. NH RSA 154:8-b includes requirements designed to reduce environmental contamination and to reduce the risk of public health impacts for firefighters and New Hampshire citizens. NH RSA 154:8-b prohibits foams containing PFAS for use in testing or training on or after January 1, 2020. NH RSA 154:8-b also bans manufacturers of Class B foams containing PFAS from knowingly selling or distributing these foams in the State of New Hampshire unless otherwise specifically exempt. Refer to the jointly issued [Technical Bulletin](#) by the state Department of Safety and the Department of Environmental Services that includes Frequently Asked Questions.

If Class B firefighting foam containing PFAS is discharged, NH RSA 154:8-b requires the municipality of the fire department that discharges Class B foam containing PFAS to notify NHDES within 48 hours of making the discharge. To report a discharge of Class B foams containing PFAS, contact Amy Doherty of the Waste Management Division, Hazardous Waste Remediation Bureau at [\(603\) 271-6542](tel:6032716542) or [amy.doherty@des.nh.gov](mailto:amy.doherty@des.nh.gov).

### **Notice to Solid Waste Facility Owners and Permittees - 2020 Annual Facility Report Forms**

On April 9, 2020, Governor Sununu authorized a temporary modification of certain reporting deadlines through [Emergency Order #29](#) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the ongoing pandemic, this emergency order is still in place. Therefore, the submittal deadline of [2020 Annual Facility Reports for active solid waste facilities](#) and [2020 Post-Closure Reports for inactive solid waste landfills](#) is extended by 90 days from March 31, 2021 to June 29, 2021. If you have questions, please contact us at [solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov](mailto:solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov) or [\(603\) 271-2925](tel:6032712925).

### **Want to Elevate Your Town's Recycling Program? Check Out This Opportunity!**

On June 2 from 9:00 AM – Noon, join Reagan Bissonnette and Bonnie Bethune of the Northeast Resource Recovery Association, a recycling nonprofit, for a workshop on understanding recycling markets and practical recycling tips for municipalities. The first part of the workshop will cover why recycling matters, material specifications and markets for recyclables, and common end markets for recyclables. The second part of the workshop will cover practical recycling tips, such as creative storage options for recyclables at municipal facilities, baling versus loose recyclables, and answering resident questions. Attendees will learn specific examples of how municipalities in New Hampshire implement these recycling tips. The workshop will also include small group discussion sessions where attendees will have an opportunity to share information with one another. There is NO FEE for this event. [Registration Link](#).

### Join us for the 2021 Virtual Drinking Water Festival!

This year the Festival is virtual and includes the third annual Poetry Contest for third, fourth and fifth graders, making this a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, Math) educational opportunity. The 2021 Virtual Festival is packed with over 40 videos and activities that connect with student's daily lives and explore how to keep water clean. The online lessons and activities are designed for students in third through fifth grades, but with the timeless importance of clean water, students in other grades (and adults) can benefit from them as well. All materials are free and openly available. Deadline for Poetry Contest entries was April 30, 2021. The Virtual Water Festival and Poetry Contest is now available at our new website [www.nhwaterfestival.org](http://www.nhwaterfestival.org). There, you will find the virtual lessons and also information about how your school can participate in the free in-person annual festival in May 2022.

### Water System Leak Detection Grant

On June 15, 2021, the [Leak Detection Survey Grant application](#) period will open. This grant is open to all community water systems in New Hampshire. Selected applicants receive a free leak detection survey in 2022 by a professional leak detection firm that is retained by NHDES through a competitive bid process. Questions may be directed to [stacey.herbold@des.nh.gov](mailto:stacey.herbold@des.nh.gov) or (603) 271-6685.

### Drought Update: Teetering on the Edge of Widespread Drought

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, 84% of the state is experiencing abnormally dry conditions and 7% of the state is in "moderate drought (D1)." Over the past two months, sporadic rain has been keeping much of the state teetering between normal, dry and drought conditions. Overall stream levels and groundwater levels are below average. Municipalities should be spreading the water conservation message and be ready to implement outdoor water restrictions if not already in place. For more information on drought conditions and implementing restrictions, see the [NHDES Drought Management webpage](#).

### Low-Income Residential Drought Assistance Program (DAP)

The Low-Income Residential Drought Assistance Program is a financial assistance program available to qualifying New Hampshire homeowners affected by drought to help restore reliable water to their homes. The program will continue to be available to New Hampshire's low-income residents for the foreseeable future because of the ongoing drought conditions. For more information, see the [Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund website](#).

### Electric Vehicle Purchasing Information

Municipalities, school systems and some nonprofits can purchase electric vehicles (EVs), plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), and higher fuel-economy vehicles off the New Hampshire state contract. EVs and PHEVs make sense for light-duty fleet diversification and have been shown to have a lower total cost of ownership than conventional gasoline and diesel vehicles. Plus, there are the added benefits of using less energy and emitting less greenhouse gases and other air pollution. To see available vehicles, check out the [2021 Vehicle Index](#), which includes purchase price, a total-cost-of-ownership and fuel-economy values. The vehicle contract is located at this link on the [NH Administrative Services website](#). If you have questions regarding the contract process, please direct them to: [alan.hofmann@nh.gov](mailto:alan.hofmann@nh.gov). **Questions concerning vehicles should go to the dealers.**

### Grants Available to Protect Water Supply Land

The New Hampshire Drinking Water and Groundwater Advisory Commission is targeting up to \$2 million from the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (DWGTF) for grants to protect public water supply land in 2021. The grant application process, administered by the Commission through NHDES, begins with a **brief eligibility application due on June 18, 2021**. Projects eligible for funding under the program involve permanent protection of land from which water flows to public water supply sources – specifically wellhead protection areas and land designated as "hydrologic areas of concern" within water supply watersheds. Projects that involve the protection of land for future water supply sources will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; guidelines are available. After NHDES reviews the eligibility applications, applicants will be asked to submit a more extensive funding application by September 9. The Trust Fund can cover up to 50% of eligible costs, up to \$500,000 per project. More information is available on the [DWGTF website](#) and by attending the workshop described below.

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Please send your comments for the editor to [editor@des.nh.gov](mailto:editor@des.nh.gov).

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